

EMILE CARDON
LA PRESSE
"The exhibition of the Revoltes"
April 29, 1874

(...) There thus remain MM. Degas, Cezanne, Monnet [sic], Sisley, Pissarro, Mlle Berthe Morisot etc. etc., the disciples of M. Manet, the pioneers of the painting of the future, the most convinced and authoritative representatives of the *School of Impressionism*. This school does away with two things: line, without which it is impossible to reproduce any form, animate or inanimate, and colour, which gives the form the appearance of reality. Dirty three-quarters of a canvas with black and white, rub the rest with yellow, dot it with red and blue blobs at random, and you will have an *impression* of spring before which the initiates will swoon in ecstasy. Smear a panel with grey, plonk some black and yellow lines across it, and the enlightened few, the visionaries, exclaim: Isn't that a perfect impression of the bois de Meudon? When the human figure is involved, it is another matter entirely: the aim is not to render its form, its relief, its expression - it is enough to give an impression with no definite line, no colour, light or shadow; in the implementation of so extravagant a theory, artists fall into hopeless, grotesque confusion, happily without precedent in art, for it is quite simply the negation of the most elementary rules of drawing and painting. The scribblings of a child have a naivety, a sincerity which make one smile, but the excesses of this school sicken or disgust.

ERNEST CHESNEAU
PARIS-JOURNAL
"Le plein air, Exposition du boulevard des Capucines"
May 7, 1874

(...) there are a dozen canvases in this exhibition which open up quite unexpected vistas of the richness of realistic effect that may be obtained with colour. Never, for example, has the northern daylight in our apartments been rendered with the realistic power contained in the canvas by M. Manet [sic] entitled *Luncheon*. Never has the seething life of the street, the teeming of the crowd on the asphalt and of vehicles on the roadway, the waving of the trees on the boulevard in dust and light, the elusiveness, the transience, the immediacy of movement been captured and fixed in all its prodigious fluidity as it is in the extraordinary and marvelous sketch which M. Manet [sic] has catalogued under the title *Boulevard des Capucines*. From a distance, this stream of life, this great shimmering of light and shade, spangled with brighter light and stronger shade, must be saluted as a masterpiece. As you approach, everything vanishes; all that remains is an indecipherable chaos of palette scrapings. Clearly, this is not the ultimate statement of art in general, nor of this art in particular. This sketch must be transformed into a finished work. But what a clarion call for those who have a subtle ear to hear, and how far it carries into the future!